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A Magazine for Church School Workers

The Church School Teacher

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THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER

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CONTENTS

ARTICLES PAGE

GOD AND THE YEAR 1944 1
Rolland W. Schloerb

WE GO VISITING 5
Herman G. Nelson

INTO THE FELLOWSHIP 9
Ruth Bonander

BOUGHT BACK 12
Lapis Argenti

NEEDED: MORE VACATION CHURCH SCHOOLS 14
Dorothea K. Wolcott

BOOKS ON BETTER RACIAL UNDERSTANDING 19
Rubye Patton Nordgren

HOME EDUCATION 21
Mildred Sizemore
Frances Duggar
Helen Gregg Green

EDITORIAL COMMENT

WHAT'S WRONG? 3

WE NEED HIM 3

BOOKS 30

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God and the Year 1944

By ROLLAND W. SCHLOERB

WHAT experiences of God can we expect in these tumultuous times? God, who is the reality in harmony with whom we find our highest life as persons and as societies, enters human experience in many ways, just as a father may play many roles in the life of a growing boy. To a little child, his father is a helper and provider. Later he becomes a critic and resister of the child's wrong behavior. The growing boy will discover his father as a counsellor when he needs guidance, a comrade in work and play, a comforter when troubles come. Through the changing experiences of life, the boy sees his father in many different roles. The father may never change his fundamental disposition of affection toward all the members of his family, and yet the boy may have varying experiences of his father.

People have similar experiences of God. As that reality in harmony with whom we find our highest life, God is the same yesterday, today and forever. James Martineau was following a sound impulse when he began a prayer with these words: "O God, who art and wast and art to come, before whose face the generations rise and pass away . . ." However, our changing experiences will bring us face to face with ever fresh aspects of the Eternal. In the Book of Exodus many different names of God are to be found. He is called Shepherd, King, Judge, depending

upon what aspect satisfies the people's greatest need at the time. The rabbis say in connection with these chapters, "According to the needs of the hour am I named." So we ask, in what ways can we experience God during the year 1944?

I.

In these war years, we are experiencing God as the *Resister* to our inadequate ways of life. We are rediscovering that God is not like an indulgent father who gives his children whatever they request of him. This universe is not governed by the whims of a sentimental parent. It is under a moral law which can not be flouted with impunity.

Several months ago a group of churchmen of our country issued an "Interfaith Declaration on World Peace." The first article upon which they agreed was this:

"The moral law must govern world order. The organization of a just peace depends upon practical recognition of the fact that not only individuals but nations, states, and international society are subject to the sovereignty of God and to the moral law which comes from God."

We are finding out how terrible the love of God can be. A God who loves *all* of his children can not condone the exploitation of some by the others. A father who loves all the members of his family will insist upon justice for all of his children, and he will resist with indignation any violation of the rights of some by the others. In our unloving and unjust attitudes toward each other, we are finding out that we are being resisted. God, to whom we can not forever be indifferent, is present as the rock upon which we might build, but against which we are dashing ourselves to pieces. In 1944 we know that God is He who resists us when we persist in unloving and unjust acts toward each other.

II.

During this year the world is full of suffering. Pain, hunger, bereavement, separation from dear ones, persecution, imprisonment, death, and a thousand other ills are the lot of men and women and little children. How can sufferers experience God?

Some may be made bitter by the experience of suffering. They will quickly point out that some who have done very little to merit their pain are suffering much more than others who are guilty of great wrong. This feeling that the uni-

Continued on page 26

"What's Wrong?"

A BRIEF STUDY of the latest religious census reveals that membership in many of the "regular" churches is almost at a standstill. In some of them it is on the downgrade. Between 1926 and 1936, according to government figures, the so-called "regular" churches lost 2 million members, or about 8 per cent of their total. The Holiness and Pentecostal sects, on the other hand, registered a phenomenal growth. One group of Pentecostal Assemblies increased 264.7 per cent, the Assemblies of God 208.7 per cent, the Church of the Nazarene 114.3 per cent, the Church of God 92.8 per cent.

Reasons given for this growth of smaller sects include the following: (1) The "regular" churches are so generally middle-class in their membership that people belonging to less advantaged income groups do not feel at home among them; (2) the emotional emphasis of these new sects has a stronger appeal to many than the more formal service of the "regular" churches; (3) the "other-worldly" emphasis in the new sects shows a sense of urgency for the salvation of souls that is not so strongly felt among the "regular" churches.

However, it would be a mistake to conclude that these sects are interested only in adult conversion. That they do not depend wholly on their high-pressure revivalism as a means of growth is indicated by the fact that they have a far larger number of Sunday school pupils in proportion to the membership of their churches than is the case in any of the larger denominations.

For example, the census reports show that the Pentecostal Holiness Church has 187 Sunday school pupils for each 100 members; the Church of the Nazarene, 166; the Christian Missionary Alliance, 135; the Salvation Army, 119. The Methodists have 71, the Presbyterians 64, the Protestant Episcopal Church but 25.

The Augustana Synod averages only 35 pupils in the Sunday school to each 100 members in the church! What's wrong?

We Need Him

ONE of the most unfortunate trends of the past fifty years has been man's growing sense of self-sufficiency. By man's efforts poverty and famine and disease and war and other evils were go-

ing to be banished from the earth. Through man's inventions and economic manipulations and social institutions the ills that had beset the human family were to be overcome.

Considerable progress has been made. To refuse to recognize the service that has been rendered by scientists, political leaders, and workers for social betterment would be both dishonest and ungrateful. Our religion gives us ideals, and it gives us both the urge and power to move toward those ideals. This fact should never be forgotten.

But it is one thing to strive to make conditions better by the help of God and an entirely different thing to assume that we are self-sufficient and that progress is automatic.

Lent and Easter are a season for instructing us anew in the old truth that we are dependent on God. The sorry condition of our civilization today leads us face to face with the fact that the grace of God is the only ground for hope in salvation, both as individuals and as society, of which each of us is a responsible part. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory!

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We Go Visiting

By HERMAN G. NELSON

Editor's Note. This is the first of a series of "look-ins" or "visits" to Sunday schools of the Augustana Synod, which will be presented during the coming year by THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER. Sunday school teachers and officers are so tied to their own duties that they have little time for visits; hence this type of visit may be appreciated for the information it brings about other Sunday schools.

SUPPOSE you are a visitor in Rockford, Illinois, on a Sunday morning and you are a guest in the home of a Zion Lutheran Church member. Assuming that you are a Sunday school teacher or officer, it is natural that you are interested in finding out how a Sunday school other than your own functions.

Instead of getting into your host's automobile, you join the family in watching for a bus marked "Zion Sunday School" and when you see it coming up the street you hustle outside and into the bus, which stops at the house's doorstep. It is well filled with youngsters and a few adults. As it proceeds on its way through the city's east-side residential district, it picks up groups of children and young people until there is hardly standing room left.

Promptly at 9:20 A.M. the bus disgorges its load at the basement entrance of Zion Church. One among 50 or 60, you enter the church to find that you are not the first nor the last to arrive. You look into one large room to find it rapidly being filled with children of primary ages, six to eight years. You pass by a section separated by canvas, inside of which are a large number of small tables around which are assembling the beginners' age group, four and five years old. On the way to the upstairs portion of the church, you peek into a smaller room, attractively furnished, and here you see the nursery or cradle roll class, the children three years old.

You arrive upstairs just in time to take part in the opening exercises, consisting of the singing of a hymn and a prayer. As you sing, you glance around to count twelve classes comprising the intermediate

department. They occupy places in the pews of the church auditorium.

Noting a large number of classes in special rooms and several adult classes in various nooks of the church, you investigate to find that the senior pastor, the Rev. E. G. Knock, makes it his business to teach the junior confirmation class when it gathers at Sunday school time. Here is a class of nearly 50 boys and girls, with an average attendance of 30 to 35. The pastor informs you he found that very few boys or girls would turn out for junior confirmation class instruction on Saturday mornings, so he conceived the idea of combining this age group into one class on Sunday mornings, even if it meant a reduction of classes in the intermediate department, and letting them come under his guidance for a year prior to regular confirmation classes.

The junior pastor of the church, the Rev. Alf. A. Wattman, teaches a large young married couples' class, with an enrollment of more than 80 and an attendance of 50 or more young men and women.

The senior confirmation class is divided into two Sunday school classes, the boys under a man teacher and the girls under a woman teacher. Each class occupies a room of its own. There are three young women's Bible classes, with plans under way for organization of a fourth.

The Homemakers' Class, made up of middle-aged married couples, surprises you by its size, for here is another group of 40 to 50 men and women who gather every Sunday morning. In the balcony of the church there is a young men's class instructed by the county judge, a member of the church. You learn that at one time this was a much larger class but that war has reduced it to an attendance of 25 to 30 members.

From the balcony, you look into the choir section and this too seats a group of men—the Brotherhood Bible class. You think you must have seen it all, but occupying a room of its own in the basement is still another class, an older group which uses the Swedish language.

The class period for the section of the Sunday school using the upstairs portion is only half an hour in length. When the bell rings at 10 A.M., the side rooms pour their young people into the church auditorium, where intermediate class teachers have stayed in their places with their pupils. Within five minutes all is quiet again and the morning worship begins. Only a

very few young people from the Bible classes—most of them with a good excuse—have slipped out. The others remain for the worship, with the junior and senior confirmation classes occupying front pews in the church.

Since you have come to see the entire Sunday school, you begin to wonder what is happening in the downstairs section of the church. You discover three children's worship services in progress more or less at the same time. You find that while one pastor conducts the service upstairs, the other pastor goes below to preach one or two, and sometimes three short sermons to the respective groups on the child's level of understanding. There was a time at Zion when all the children, young and old, attended the one worship period, but the present plan has been found much more satisfactory. The room where the primary group worships has been fitted with an altar and pulpit and the surroundings are conducive to promotion of a worship spirit. Some of the teachers remain with the classes, but many go upstairs to attend the regular worship service. The youngsters are as attentive, and probably more so, as the older people in the other service.

As in every Sunday school, you find the officers flitting about handing out papers and other materials, collecting the attendance cards and collection envelopes and compiling the attendance chart. The junior pastor is superintendent, by election of the church board of deacons, who also name two lay superintendents, one of whom is in general charge of the upstairs portion of the Sunday school and the other of the downstairs section. Each department has its own superintendent, except the Bible class department, handled by the upstairs lay superintendent. Departmental superintendents and other officers are elected annually by the teachers.

From the attendance and enrollment records, you find that Zion Sunday School has an attending enrollment of about 750 pupils, with an average attendance of about 500 or better. The low percentage is due principally to the large enrollment in the Bible classes, where practically everybody is kept on the rolls for quite a few years after confirmation. In the other departments of the Sunday school, the attendance ranges from 75 to 100 per cent by classes. Enrollment is divided approximately as follows: cradle roll, 30; begin-

ners, 70; primary, 160; intermediate, 140; confirmation, 40; Bible classes, 310; and officers, 10.

All the worship periods, upstairs and down, end simultaneously at 11 A.M. As the church empties, in comes a group of older persons for the Swedish service. With your host, you again board the special Sunday school bus, waiting outside the church, and are again let off at your home doorstep.

By good fortune, you are a Rockford visitor on a Sunday when the Zion Sunday School has arranged an afternoon departmental parent-teacher get-together. It is the beginners' department this time. A short program gets under way at 4 P.M. A social hour with refreshments follows. The children get seats at the same tables they used in the morning, each group with its woman teacher, and here they are served their refreshments. Mothers and daddies are grouped in a half circle at one end of the room, comfortably seated so they can visit with each other and also watch the youngsters, who are having a grand time, yet behaving with decorum.

Each department presents parent-teacher get-togethers once a year during the winter and spring months. Officers prepare the refreshments so teachers need not be concerned with that phase of the arrangements but can devote all their time to the children and parents. Both pastors mingle with the parents and children, talking briefly with parents active in the church and at greater length with those who send their children to Sunday school but who do not themselves belong. Out of these contacts come opportunities for calls in the homes and for enrollment in adult confirmation classes.

One is impressed at Zion by the interest displayed by teachers and pupils, that classes waste no time in getting down to a study of the lesson and that the Sunday school is a smoothly functioning organization throughout, even though there are spots which can be and are being improved.

"Keep certain seasons for yourself in which to think of God and to draw near to Him. You must read, pray, distrust your own inclinations and habits, remember that you carry the gift of God in an earthen vessel, and above all strengthen your inner life with His love."—FENELON.

Into the Fellowship

By RUTH BONANDER

THE Christian Church is a fellowship and includes in its membership not only adults but children and youth as well. In planning the total program in the local congregation care should be taken that opportunities are provided for all age groups to share in the life and work of the church. It should be a partnership of old and young alike in a program of fellowship, worship, and service.

What part then shall children below the age of twelve have in this Christian fellowship?

1. *Belonging through Participation.* "From his earliest associations in the church the child should have a sense of belonging." When he says, "This is my church," the child has the feeling of at-homeness in the congregation, or being a real part of it. As a pupil in the Sunday school he will become familiar with certain rooms in the church building, but in addition to that his experience should include happy associations with adults, friendship with other children of his own age as well as boys and girls both older and younger than he, and participation in the essential work of the church.

Such affairs as "family night," which include both social and service activities, serve these ends; for there adults, youth and children associate and work together.

Through-the-week meetings such as extra sessions of the Sunday school class, recreational and social affairs, club programs, weekday classes in Christian education, and vacation church schools as well as observance of special days and festivals will provide additional church experiences.

2. *Worshiping with the Entire Congregation.*

The days of the "family pew" are practically gone. In fact, the practice in many places suggests rather that we believe that children do not belong in the public worship service or do not need to attend. Some individuals are even annoyed by the presence of (or disturbance by) youngsters in the congregation. "It is expecting too much," say some parents, "to ask children to sit quiet for so long a time as the usual morning

worship service requires." "They can not understand it anyway, and so it does not benefit them," say other adults.

"While there must be a place in the program of religious education for separate sessions by age groups which will occupy the larger part of the time available, there are also needs, interests, and experiences which the children share with adults. Since this is true it seems that there should be an opportunity for meeting these common needs through a common service. The members of the church family live in the same world, whether they be adults or children, and there should be common elements in their worship.

"Moreover, both adults and children need the sense of fellowship, one with another, in worship. For children to have the experience of seeing the entire congregation worshiping together is an experience of high religious value. For adults to see the joy of the children, to feel the sense of the continuity of the fellowship of God's people from age to age is to enrich their own worship.

"And so as a part of the total program, there may be a common service of worship for all of the members of the congregation, planned with all the participants in mind. Let us hasten to say that we are not thinking of a special sermonette or story for the children interjected into the midst of the adult service. This would take away much of the value of participation. Rather, we mean that the service should be based upon those common aspirations and interests of all the congregation and that it should use material that has meaning for all age groups participating." *

Special efforts should be made to secure the attendance of children at the worship service on Sunday. Provision should be made for them to sit with their parents or with their church school teachers.

Occasionally there might be a "Family Service," in which family groups are seated together and special consideration is given to important factors in family life.

Not all of the sermon at every service will be within the children's ability to understand, but certainly each one should have some material in it—illustrations and stories—that is especially suitable for boys and girls.

* From *The Church and the Children,* by Mary Alice Jones, Director of Children's Work of the International Council of Religious Education.

A great many hymns used in the church are appreciated by the children. Boys and girls attending the service should be encouraged to participate in the reading of Scripture, either from the texts printed in the hymnal or from their own Bibles which they carry to church school. The liturgical service should be explained to juniors and intermediates at least. Even children who can not read will know the Lord's Prayer, perhaps parts of the Creed, and they can learn other brief parts of the service, such as one or more of the responses.

There should be a junior choir and it may be given a place in the Sunday morning service. It might lead the regular processional and be seated in the front pews. In some churches the junior choir provides the anthem in place of the senior choir on certain Sundays in the year.

3. *Knowing "Our Pastor."*

The pastor ought to know the children as well as the adults of the congregation. In some situations, perhaps mostly large city congregations, it may happen that the children do not know who the pastor of the church is. Every children's department in the church school should have a visit by the pastor of the church as frequently as possible.

4. *Service Enterprises.*

The works of charity and missions offer opportunities for participation by children. Boys and girls should experience a sense of responsibility in the support of their church and its missionary program. This can be done by planning the program of giving so that the children contribute to the support of "our church" (the local congregation) and to the missionary work sponsored by Conference and Synod. To learn about and participate in the work of the Church will also help to build them into the fellowship.

In these and other ways which we may discover from time to time all age groups may become a part of the Christian fellowship.

Additional Reading:

The Educational Work of the Church, by Nevin C. Harner—Chapters IV and VI.

The Church and the Children, by Mary Alice Jones, Chapters IX and X.

Understanding Children, by Lewis J. Sherrill, Chapter X.

Bought Back

By LAPIS ARGENTI

BOATS and boats were the playthings with my brothers and myself when we grew up. What could be more natural for boys living near water and seeing boats both large and small crisscrossing the lakes every minute in summer time? But our boats were only miniatures of the larger ones. Every boy was the owner of at least one such boat, though some had more than one. At a very early age I had one myself and later on I had several. We sailed them in the shallow water near the shore and it gave us a thrill to see them skim over the waves, sometimes so fast that we hardly could follow them. And if we time and again came home all wet, it was because we had been compelled to run after our boats and had stumbled and fallen in the water.

Sometimes our boats took a course we had not anticipated and went out on deeper water where we could not follow them. Then in many instances our boats were lost. To us such losses were keenly felt, because they had a certain sentimental value as well as a financial one.

Erik had a boat he valued very highly. It was cut out from a spruce tree, very light and rigged like a typical schooner, just like the big ones we saw far out at sea. One day he sailed it a little too far out and finally he could no longer follow it. We watched it a long distance out on the big bay, until it disappeared from sight.

Some time later Erik was sent by his father around the bay to a store. In the store he saw his lost boat, the storekeeper having it for sale. Erik told the storekeeper that it was his boat and demanded it from him. But the storekeeper refused to let him have it and told him the only way he could get it was to buy it for a certain sum. Erik returned to his father in a hurry and told the story. His father gave him the price asked and the boy returned to the storekeeper and bought back his own boat.

When we read in the Catechism the words: "He redeemed me, etc.," we are reminded of Erik's

experience with his boat. We are the Lord's and He is our owner. This ownership would have continued to our benefit had it not been for the fact that an ill wind drove us off into enemy territory. Our enemy wanted to have us because of his constant enmity toward God and jealousy over our belonging to the Lord. When he had an opportunity to snatch us out of the hands of God, he did so and we were lost.

The fact that God had the rightful ownership to us did not impress the enemy, for he laid claim to us as if we always had belonged to him. This situation did not lead to our happiness and contentment. On the contrary our lives were filled with misery and despair. In the enemy's hands we became slaves compelled to carry out his purposes with no good reward. Instead, when our lives here on earth are ended, the enemy has in store for us eternal sorrow and remorse over lives we have lived apart from our rightful owner, our Lord.

Knowing our situation, God in His mercy did the only thing that could be done. As we could not or can not by our own reason and strength believe in God or come to Him and free ourselves from the bondage of our enemy, God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem us. Jesus paid the price for us with His blood, His suffering and death, and thus bought us to bring us back to God. We are therefore now His in a twofold sense: first because He has created us and secondly because He has redeemed us by the blood of His Son.

To remain God's own we must now be on guard against the enemy's many schemes to overpower us and again tear us from the hands of God. Even to do this we are helpless except through the power of God. It should therefore be our constant prayer that He may strengthen our faith more and more until the day when we shall appear before Him in glory to inherit eternal life.

"People who claim that they can worship God in the great outdoors as well as in man-made churches are people who usually sleep until noon on Sundays and spend the rest of the day reading the morning papers."

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Needed: More Vacation Church Schools

By DOROTHEA K. WOLCOTT

HAVE you ever compared the amount of time which boys and girls receive in Sunday church school and weekday church school with that of a vacation church school? In a four weeks vacation church school, there are eight more hours than we have in Sunday church school if we count an hour for each Sunday of the year. In most weekday church schools the children have a period of forty-five minutes to an hour during each of the forty weeks of public school, so the month of vacation church school offers a third more time than the year's weekday church school program.

Perhaps, you are asking what is the value of this extra time? The vacation church school with its consecutive periods during the week provides a day by day experience in living as a Christian. There are values in having boys and girls live together as a group, trying to discover the principles of Christianity and applying them to their own lives. As they study, worship, work, and play together, they can try out the teachings of Jesus and discover for themselves whether life is more interesting and joyful when the rule of love is put into practice. Thus the supreme test of a vacation church school experience is whether it helps children grow in Christian life.

We recognize that the guidance of the religious development of children includes in addition to Biblical knowledge, a concern for socially wholesome attitudes and habits, for finding the fullest meanings in the daily experiences of living, and for a sense of belonging and security on the part of the child as the best basis for a later religious philosophy. In times such as these, children need undergirding and strengthening in the great spiritual truths of justice, righteousness—belief in one God and the brotherhood of all mankind. We need to develop a sense of world-wide Christian fellowship.

In the longer session of the va-

cation church school, children have the opportunity to express their attitudes and motives, not only in conduct and conversation, but through various other means of interpretation through drawings in murals, picturols, posters, notebooks, dramatization, stories, poems, and so forth. In this way the teacher gains insight into the values which children have adopted for their philosophy of living. Recent studies in conduct and moral concepts of children reveal that mere information as to what is right and wrong does not guarantee conduct consistent with it. Thus mere repetition of precept by teacher or parent is not very fruitful unless opportunity for actual experience in living in accordance with the teaching is provided. Psychologists tell us that character formation is related chiefly to early childhood experiences. Hence the church has a real responsibility for providing more hours of supervised Christian living.

What will you need to do in your community to have a wide-awake vacation church school? First, your church or, better still, the churches of your neighborhood, should be made aware of the *real* opportunity for service which a vacation church school offers. You, as church school teacher, superintendent, minister, parent or lay member of the congregation can start the ball rolling. It is the greatest experience of missions at home which you can ever witness. In many communities, over fifty per cent of their children and youth have never been served by the church. One small lad came into vacation church school last summer and shyly said, "I've never been in a church before. Will you show me what it looks like in there (the sanctuary)?" With awe he tiptoed down the aisle and slipped into a seat motioning the leader to sit beside him. He pointed to the windows and smiled, his eyes reflecting the effect of their beauty. To Him who called us to be His followers, the religious growth of that one little lad was worth the effort of that whole school.

In these days when we are becoming more community minded in our planning, we need to be certain that "concern for every child" is a part of our church program. It is the responsibility of the church to be represented on the community committees and actively to participate in making the services for children and youth more effective. In our city, representatives of all agencies at work

with children and youth meet to determine whether the various summer programs available will reach all the city's children. In some instances, changes have to be made to distribute these opportunities to unreached areas. Vacation church schools cut across the center of these activities. In several suburban communities they offer the only summer program for boys and girls. In other areas, the vacation church schools co-operate with the recreational programs of playgrounds and provide a full day's schedule of activities with study and worship in the morning and creative activities and recreation in the afternoon. One negro community, which has never had a school, planned a co-operative interdenominational program and reached over 200 children daily.

In an underprivileged neighborhood, where many mothers are working, the vacation church school program continued the feeding program of the public school of that community. With the help of the Red Cross in planning menus and supplying milk, meals were served from Excess Commodities. The cooks of the school lunchroom were secured to continue this program. Both negro and white children worked together in this vacation church school. It proved a real experience for the workers of this church to witness the happiness of these needy children as they worshiped, worked, played and were fed in the shadows of stained glass windows in this century old church.

One community held a day camp program with vacation church school in the morning and hikes, swims, excursions, picnics, movies and crafts in the afternoon.

In one rural community, where there was no church building with facilities for all the children, the school board gave permission to use the school building for the vacation church school. Departmental groups went to near-by churches for the worship programs, which had been planned by their worship committee during their work period. Another negro community secured the use of the Y. M. C. A. as a meeting place for their vacation church school. Over a hundred children learned to work together in this school and awe-inspiring were the trips to various churches of that community, both negro and white.

In many recently established communities, where trailers and new homes are the only buildings, there have been out-of-door vaca-

tion church schools, or tent schools, which are perfect settings for the study of early Bible children as they learned to worship one God in their nomadic life.

When your presentation of the opportunities for a vacation church school has challenged your church, or churches, you will need leadership. The secret of success for any vacation church school depends largely upon the consecration and Christian example of its workers. Choose those teachers who love children and who show by their friendliness, patience and joy in living that the way of Christ is a happy way of life. One public school teacher this last year testified that the happy experience of guiding a primary group in a vacation school in her church made it possible for her to endure the discouragements of teaching a mentally deficient group in public school.

Plan to train your workers for this challenging task. Your spring leadership school should include one of the courses on vacation church school. You could conduct this class one evening a week during the month of April or May. Many communities have found it profitable to set up a series of conferences for vacation school workers, where several schools are to be organized. In many communities a laboratory school can be conducted as a demonstration of methods and curriculum. This can be planned for Saturdays in May or for a week before vacation schools open. Some churches have used a department as a demonstration center for new teachers of vacation school. Parents may be enlisted as resource helpers for music, crafts and recreation. The vacation church school affords such a real opportunity for the growth of leaders that in many cases it has been used as a laboratory training school for teachers and other workers who continue working with boys and girls throughout the year in the Sunday schurch school.

Another important problem is the choice of materials. A list may be secured from your denominational book store. The books themselves may be ordered through the denominational book stores. In one of the courses for primary grouping, a boy who had never found Sunday church school interesting and had made life miserable for teachers and his classmates found the unit very fascinating. At the laboratory school where this course was used in manuscript form before it was printed, this

boy said: "I wish I had known all this about Jesus before. He did so many interesting things and I'd liked to have gone to his school." Joe learned from Jesus to work with the other children and was thrilled to use his skill in aiding others in some of the more difficult activities.

It is sometimes worth while to choose your curriculum around a central theme or subject. There is a sense of unity if all groups are working toward the same objectives. Last summer our city selected materials for each age group which fitted together under the theme for the entire school, "Growing with Jesus." You might center your courses around Followers of Jesus, Lands of the Bible, The Church, The Community, or God at Work in Nature.

The long-time view will insure a conservation of the values of your vacation church school. Measure the growth of your children in daily Christian living, also the advance of your teachers in experience and enthusiasm. Continue this program of nurture in other activities of the church throughout the year. Make use of the training gained in worship, music, stories and service projects through other avenues of church work on Sunday and through the week. A weekly club carrying on the activities of the vacation school will keep the interest of the summer vitalized for your next vacation school.*

You can plan for a vacation church school that will meet the needs of your children and enlist them in following Christ.

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* See "Boys and Girls in Christian Clubs," International Council of Religious Education, price fifty cents.

IT IS TRUE . . . ?

One day Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, medical missionary to Labrador, was guest at a dinner in London together with a number of socially prominent British men and women.

During the course of the dinner, the lady seated next to him turned and said, "Is it true, Dr. Grenfell, that you are a missionary?"

Dr. Grenfell looked at her for a moment before replying, "Is it true, madam, that you are not?"—*Sunday School Promoter.*

Books on Better Racial Understanding

By RUBYE PATTON NORDGREN

TO PRESERVE democracy we must encourage attitudes of respect for our Christian ideals. One of the best ways to do this is to give boys and girls books to read, books that portray truthfully and sympathetically the lives of boys and girls of other races and nationalities.

Global understanding leads to unity and good will. Walt Whitman seemed aware of this unity and good will and also of the way it could be achieved. Listen to him:

"This moment yearning and thoughtful sitting alone,
It seems to me there are other men in other lands yearning and thoughtful,
It seems to me that I can look over and behold them in Germany, Italy, France, Spain;
Or far, far away in China, or in Russia or Japan, talking other dialects;
And it seems to me that if I could *know* those men I should become attached to them as I do to men in my own land.
I know we should be brethren and lovers,
I know I should be happy with them."

—From *Leaves of Grass,* by Walt Whitman. Copyright, 1924, by Doubleday, Doran and Company.

Most Sunday schools can afford a browsing table with a few books in each of the departments. Many schools manage a circulating library, too. Do you hear someone say, "We couldn't do it"? Have they tried? Let them begin with a few books. Publicize their needs in the church bulletin and in the Guild or Ladies' Aid. Donations of books and money are sure to come.

The following are a few of the very good books on racial groups:

Jewish

Children of the Promise, by Florence Crannell Means. Price $1. Friendship Press.

Mexican, Spanish, American

Paradise Valley, by Valenti Angelo. Price $2. Viking.

Pedro of Santa Fe, by Frances Cavanah. Price $1. McKay.

A New Mexican Boy, by Helen L. Marshall. Price $2. Holiday.

Negro

Shuttered Windows, by Florence Crannell Means. Price $2. Houghton.

Little Jeemes Henry, by Ellis Credle. Price $1.50. Nelson.

Flop-Eared Hound, by Ellis Credle. Price $2. Oxford.

Nicodemus and His New Shoes, by Inez Hogan. Price $1. Dutton.

Steppin and Family, by Hope Newell. Price $2. Oxford.

Tobe, by Stella Gentry Sharpe. Price $1. University of North Carolina Press.

We Sing America, by Marion Cuthbert. Price $1. Friendship Press.

Quaker

Thee, Hannah! by Marguerite De Angeli. Price $2. Doubleday.

Swedish

Elin's Amerika, by Marguerite De Angeli. Price $2. Doubleday.

They Came from Sweden, by Clara Ingram Judson. Price $2. Houghton.

Dutch

Henner's Lydia, by Marguerite De Angeli. Price $2. Doubleday.

Shippack School, by Marguerite De Angeli. Price $2. Doubleday.

French

They Came from France, by Clara Ingram Judson. Price $2. Houghton.

Indians

Chi-Wee, by Grace Moon. Price 88 cents. Doubleday.

Pueblo Boy, by Sylvia Starr and Joseph B. Wertz. Price 50 cents. McKay.

Chi-Wee and Loki, by Grace Moon. Price $2. Doubleday.

Komoki of the Cliffs, by Isis Harrington. Price $1.25. Scribner.

The Indians in Winter Camp, by Therese Deming. Price $1. Laidlaw.

Bohemian

Maminka's Children, by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Price $2. Macmillan.

Collections of Short Stories

Americans Every One, by Lavinia R. Davis. Price $1.50. Doubleday.

The Pigtail Twins, by Anne Halladay. Price $1. Friendship Press.

Children of America, by Barbara Nolen. Price $1.50. Winston.

The Chinese Children Next Door, by Pearl Buck. Price $1.50. Day.

The Dutch Twins, by Lucy Fitch Perkins. Price $1.75. Houghton.

The Indian Twins, by Lucy Fitch Perkins. Price $1.75. Houghton.

The Mexican Twins, by Lucy Fitch Perkins. Price $1.75. Houghton.

The Meican Twins, by Lucy Fitch Perkins. Price $1.75. Houghton.

The Chinese Twins, by Lucy Fitch Perkins. Price $1.75. Houghton.

Biography

The Promised Land, by Mary Antin. Price $3. Houghton.

Our Foreign Born Citizens, by Annie Beard. Price $2.50. Crowell.

Boy on Horseback, by Sleffins Lincoln. Price $2. Harcourt.

An American in the Making, by Marcus Eli Ravage. Price $1. Harper.

Americans by Adoption, by Joseph Husband. Price $1. Little.

The Americanization of Edward Bok, by Edward Bok. Price $1. Scribner.

Note. The prices quoted above are only approximate. Because of rising costs, prices may have been advanced recently. Any of the books listed here may be secured from your church publication house.

Home Education

Issued by the National Kindergarten Association.

Who Is to Blame?

By MILDRED SIZEMORE

"GOOD afternoon, Mrs. Blake," Mary Green said as she opened the door and invited the caller to enter. "May I take your wraps?" This attention being smilingly rendered, she added, "Mother is waiting for you in the sunroom," and with that she led the way.

Mrs. Green came forward cordially. "I'm all ready for you, Lela. I was just putting the finishing touches to my report and I am sure you will find it complete. I promised to take the children to the Art Exhibit at three o'clock, so I was glad when you telephoned that you would call for my report at two."

A few days later Mrs. Blake called at the Green home again, saying, "Irene, if you have a little time to spare, I'd like your help on a problem that I am struggling with. It's about children's behavior where adults are concerned."

"Why certainly, Lela. If I can be of any assistance to you I shall be glad."

Mrs. Blake continued, "When I called here Saturday afternoon, I knew I shouldn't stay too long because you told me when I first came that you were taking the children to the Art Exhibit. The children, however, said nothing to indicate that they were impatient or afraid that I should stay too long and prevent you from taking them.

"Only last week I had such a distressing experience with my children; it was very embarrassing. I had promised James and Margaret that I would take them downtown on Saturday evening. Mrs. Adams telephoned asking if she might drive by to turn over some club dues to me, and I told her to do so, but when she arrived the children were positively rude. Margaret fidgeted about the room and James stood beside me as we talked, swinging impatiently from side to side, nudging my elbow every few minutes, putting on and taking off his cap. Finally, he blurted out, 'By the time you get through gabbing the stores will be closed.' I could have punished him then and there.

"I try to teach the children to be mannerly. Is it my fault that they are so rude? How do you teach yours to be so courteous?"

"Lela, I do not see any reason why your children should not be courteous to guests. You are always so gracious. While I do not believe in the old saying 'Children should be seen and not heard,' I do believe that they should not be rude or try to be the center of attention.

"I have taught mine that anyone who comes to our home is an honored guest and should be treated as such. If any of my friends call and I have made arrangements to take the children somewhere I always tell a guest as soon as she arrives, but I don't think any of them have ever resented it. I know that when I call on a friend I should much rather she would tell me that she has to leave at a given time than to allow me to be the cause of her disappointing her children or being late for an engagement.

"Since the children have been old enough, I have let them answer the door, and so they have constant practice in greeting my guests. It gives them a sense of importance and teaches them to be courteous."

"Irene," Mrs. Blake interrupted, "it has just dawned upon me that it *has* been much my fault that my children have been rude. They have been unconsciously reacting to my behavior. Many a time when I have been busy and the doorbell has rung I have made some remark about callers being a nuisance.

"I believe I was more at fault than James the other evening when Mrs. Adams called. I knew that she would be there only a few minutes because she told me so over the telephone, but the children did not know but what we should visit all the evening and they had planned so much on going to the stores.

"I see that I have been almost entirely at fault and thank you so much for making me see it. I know the children will co-operate with me if I go at the difficulty in the right way."

Doris and Her Skates

By FRANCES DUGGAR

DORIS lifted glowing eyes to her teacher's face.

"Miss Green, I've brought my skates to school today. May I skate on the school walks at recess?"

"No, Doris," said Miss Green, hating to extinguish that bright

radiance. "As all the grades do not have recess at the same time, skating under the windows would make too much noise. Many of the pupils could not study."

The little girl's lips trembled. Two big tears obscured the blueness of her eyes. She seemed for a moment to be lost in thought. Then she spoke hesitantly. "But Mother said she wanted me to skate at school. I have to do what my mother says, don't I?"

"Not this time," said Miss Green gently. "Your mother did not understand about the noise. She wouldn't want you to disturb the other grades."

Sadly the child took the shining skates to the coatroom and put them away in a corner.

"It's a shame," thought Miss Green, "that she hasn't been able to use her Christmas skates yet. Of course the highway in front of her house is much too dangerous for skating. Why do people give things to their children and then provide no way for the children to use them?"

That afternoon Miss Green called Doris's mother on the telephone. "I'm sorry," she said, "that I couldn't let Doris skate at school as you requested."

"Wait a minute! What's that you are saying? Why, Doris must have told two lies, Miss Green. This morning she told me that you asked her to bring the skates to school to use at recess. Then she told you that I requested it. Doris must be severely punished. She adores her skates. I shall take them away and pack them up for six months."

"Mrs. Moore, I hope you will not do that. I do not believe that Doris is entirely to blame."

"Doris not to blame, Miss Green! I have always taught her how wrong it is to tell a lie!"

"Yes, Mrs. Moore, but you gave Doris a pair of skates and she has never had a chance to use them. If I were you, I shouldn't punish the child. Instead I should tell her that I was sorry she had told what was untrue, but that I understood how much she wanted to skate and would help her find a way to do it.

"Then on some of the afternoons when you come to town, I should bring Doris and leave her with one of her classmates. She could bring her skates and have a lovely time skating on the sidewalk with her playmates."

"Do you really think that would be best, Miss Green?"

"Yes, I do, Mrs. Moore. You

will be helping your child do the thing that her heart is set on. She will remember that, and next time she meets a difficulty she will go to you for help instead of trying to remedy the situation in some wrong or unwise way."

"Miss Green, I do believe you are right. As Doris grows older I shall want her confidence more and more. I should begin to win it now. Thank you very much for the help you have given me."

Teaching Children the Beauty of Appreciation

By HELEN GREGG GREEN

OUR world would be a happier place if more children were taught to be appreciative—to be really appreciative and to express it. It is worth while for boys and girls to learn now to be sincerely grateful for any special thoughtfulness rendered them and to be enthusiastic when mentioning it, in some cases referring to it on several occasions.

I am particularly in the mood to write this article. In two instances recently I went to great pains to select unusually attractive wedding gifts. In the first case I finally visited the postmaster and asked for papers to trace the present, being quite sure so long a time would not have elapsed had the brocaded evening bag been received. The day I started making out the paper, a belated apologetic thank-you note arrived.

The other gift was delivered months ago. I asked the assistant buyer of a gift department to help me with the selection, as I wanted something lovely and individual. The buyer, knowing the stock, found a pair of lamps that should cause the heart of any bride to sing. But if there were any singing, the bride did not let us in on the secret.

Other incidents portraying this painful lack of expressed appreciation flock to my memory thick and fast. A friend of mine and her husband invited some suburban friends to enjoy the comfort and charm of their city house while they spent a vacation in Florida. Later they confided to me that not even a tiny bread-and-butter note have they received since their friends' departure.

Then there was the church convention, when we were all requested to open our homes to out-of-town delegates. My father asked the committee specifically

for the privilege of entertaining two young ministers whose churches he had attended in cities where he, as a lawyer, was trying some cases. It was customary to charge the delegates a minimum price and to give no meals. We said, "You are to be our personal guests and also to have breakfast with us every day you are here."

Wishing to please my father who was so happy to have them with us, I moved from my large, pleasant bedroom for the duration of their stay. Our colored cook was at her home, ill, at the time, but she made an effort to come a distance of several miles every morning to prepare a particularly delicious breakfast. We even drove to the country each day to buy fine cantaloupes, and we asked a tea-room, that was famous for its sweet rolls, to furnish them for our breakfasts as long as these gentlemen were with us.

At no time did either of our guests think to surprise us with a box of candy or make any other gracious gesture of appreciation; nor did either of them write, afterwards, even a line to say our hospitality was appreciated. And both men were college graduates, supposedly men of culture.

Parents should make sure that boys and girls will not grow into the type of men and women who take every gift, every gracious offer of hospitality and kindness, for granted. Almost as soon as a child begins to talk he should be taught to say "Thank you" for any gift, regardless of its size or value. But that in itself is not enough; he must be made to *enjoy* being appreciative.

I have a little friend Jimmy, aged six, whose mother has taught him to telephone everyone who remembers him. He takes great delight in doing this, and the habit will strengthen with the years.

A mother should not get into the way of thinking *her* thanks are enough. Most often it is the mother's fault when her child depends upon her to do the honors.

I received a commencement invitation from a young cousin graduating as an honor student from Swarthmore, and so I asked a young man of excellent taste to select a handsome tie. The mother of Cousin William thanked me for the tie! At another time I had a similar experience with William's elder brother.

Now that mother is one of the smartest women I have ever known. She has brought up her boys admirably in almost every re-

spect. But there is one gracious lesson she has overlooked—she forgot to teach her children appreciation, and the charm of the small amenities of life.

So again may I suggest that you teach your boy and your girl the graciousness—yes, and the enjoyment to both giver and recipient—of *expressed* appreciation?

God and the Year 1944

From page 2

verse does not play fair is nothing new, but it seems new to each generation. It is one of the great unanswered questions for those who believe that a good God is working out His purposes among men.

Sufferers are not helped most by an explanation of their suffering. They are helped when they are given strength to bear it, and when they are given courage to try to make some good come out of the suffering that is their lot. The One who hung upon the cross, not because He deserved that kind of treatment, but because He refused not to love to the end, is the ever fresh testimony to the available God who helps people to use their suffering to some good end.

Those who nailed Jesus to the cross by their false accusations and by their manipulation of the crowd stood back and said, "He trusts in God; let God deliver Him if He cares for Him, for He said He was God's Son." God did not deliver Him from suffering—God was at work in Him to deliver men from their bondage to selfishness. The voice of God does not often tell sufferers *why* they suffer, but the resources of God are present to help them to discover HOW they can use their suffering to some high end.

III.

It is hoped that many people will find God as the GREAT HEALER during this year. During World War I, a soldier was asked to tell what he meant by the "grace of God." He told about the healing of his wound, pointing out that forces working in him went to work to mend again the broken tissues and to restore his body to health. The same kind of process can be observed in a war-torn area when spring comes again. Vividly I remember the impression made upon me by the grass-covered and flower-dotted fields in France in the spring of 1919. These fields had been chewed up and wounded by the shells during the previous year, but with the coming of peace the restorative powers of nature

had gone to work and had started the process of healing.

This healing process is something we can count on. We do not produce it in our own bodies, we can aid or hinder it, but it is placed there by the Creator. God is that power working in us to heal and to restore the ailing one to health and the wounded one to wholeness.

When one contemplates the deep damage done to human relationships, he can not but wonder whether there are resources available to heal the wounded body of our humanity. Can people who have deceived each other for years ever trust each other again? Can nations that have lightly broken their pledges be expected to develop a sense of honor? Can the hatreds be changed to a spirit of forgiveness?

Each of us has seen people so ill that it seemed they never could recover from their sickness. Sometimes even the will to live was gone. And yet there was a power at work within them even stronger than death that brought them back to health again. The broken body of our humanity is not without its healing forces. Deceit finally frustrates those who continue to use it as a means of gaining their ends, while "truth crushed to earth will rise again." From the writer of the last book in the Old Testament we hear the reassuring word, "But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." In this picturesque form this writer affirms his faith that God will be present as healer of our broken human family.

IV.

Will we experience God in 1944 as One who needs us? It is not difficult to believe that we will need Him. Many are driven to Him because they have nowhere else to go. The soldier writes from the camp that because he knows no one to whom he can pour out his heart, he turns Godward in his thoughts and speaks to the "Dear Comrade" in prayer. Prayer takes on new meaning for him because of his need.

In another camp two soldiers were chatting about prayer. One man said that he had prayed every day since he had come into the army. His explanation was this: "I have found that I can not trust any person, so I must trust God. People have disappointed me many times, and so I must have faith in God." New circumstances created a new need for him. The person-

to-person communion with God that we call prayer helped to meet that need.

But does God need us? The part that any one of us can perform as an individual in the world seems so inconsequential that the tendency for each of us is to feel that he can do nothing to make this a better world. All that he can do is to wait for God to bring deliverance. Such an attitude toward God cuts the nerve of endeavor, and while it is more commendable than the spiritual pride which says that we have no need of God, it is hardly the faith commended by Christianity.

God may not need our strength, but He uses even our weakness to accomplish His gracious purposes. God is the inspirer of effort, and the upholder of those who do the duty lying nearest to them.

While sitting on a truck with the commanding officer of our battalion in the fall of 1918, I turned the conversation to the subject of God. "God?" answered the officer. "There is no God. If there were a God, He would not allow this war to occur." I gave the usual reply, "God did not make the war. People made it." "That's true," he countered, "but God made the people so that they made the war." He was right. God gave men freedom to use their energies to destroy one another or to help and to sustain one another. And rather than destroy our freedom of choice, God calls us to use our abilities to work with Him in the redemption of humanity.

In his book, *The World at One in Prayer,* Dr. Fleming tells the tale from Congo folklore about two women, each of whom, when dying, said to her child: "When I am dead you must look in the tall grass. There you will find food." One child looked and looked through the tall grass and gradually wasted away because she found no food. The other took her hoe, went where the grass was tall, knowing that the soil was good in that place, and there made her vegetable garden. God has given us a universe rich with possibility for good and he who tries to understand the ways of God among men will aim to be a "co-worker with God."

God is that Reality in harmony with whom we find our highest life as individuals and in society. When we work against His purposes, we experience Him as the Resister who frustrates us. When we suffer, we have resources from

Him to bear our suffering bravely and transmute it into something good. A sick and wounded humanity will also find Him as the present healer, while co-workers with Him will be able to say with Peter, "We *and* the Holy Spirit . . . are witnesses."

"Good News"

THE MISSIONARY had been asking his evangelists for several weeks for a native tune to which Christian words could be put. For while the Buzis liked to sing the English hymns and spirituals translated to their native tongue, it seemed only right that they should have songs of their own to express the joy and the message of their new life.

One day while visiting Evangelist Abraham Mumol we heard the children singing, clapping their hands and dancing, in the greatest joy. It was a native tune, but the words "bad news" and "Country Devil" were changed so that we heard this:

"I have heard good news today."

"Oh, who has told you?"

"God's Word."

"Christian, oh, who has told you?"

"Christian, oh, who has told you?"

"God's Word!"

"Abraham, that is just what I have been asking you for these last three months. Why didn't you tell me

about this song?" "Is that what you wanted?" he replied in surprise. "I didn't understand what you meant. Why, we can make lots of songs like that! I made a few verses to show them, but now they make up their verses as they go along. They sing through the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and all the stories of Jesus' life that they know. Of course it isn't all just right, but most of it is. And people who never heard the gospel, who wouldn't think of coming to services, are coming to me and asking about this good news that they hear their children singing about all day long."

In just this way began the development of Christian music among the Buzi people. This first song became popular at once throughout all the church. Others are following. The church is becoming a part of the life of another tribe, as they sing it into their lives.

—Rev. George Flora, missionary of the United Lutheran Church, Liberia, Africa.

The Church and Its Young Adults, by J. Gordon Chamberlin. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 124 pages. $1.00.

"Young adults," says the author, "have only one characteristic in common—they are young at the business of being adults." This, however, is enough in common to call upon the church to give liberal and wise attention to the needs of persons in this period of life.

The church does not hold all the youth it has reared, and a considerable proportion of them are lost during the period of "settling down." It is a time of establishing homes, rearing chil-

dren, getting one's stride in one's vocation, finding one's place in the community, and working out a pattern of social life. Frequently the church is left out of the picture, or at best regarded as just one more institution along with clubs, labor unions, lodges, and civic organizations, when in reality it must be at the heart and core of all of life. Otherwise it has lost its genius.

In an interesting and illuminating way the author discusses the problem. But he does not stop there. He goes on to prescribe numerous organized activities that the church may provide for the enrichment, guidance, and mobilization of young adults. The book has value not only for alert pastors, but also for young adults themselves.

Daily Life in Bible Times, by Albert E. Bailey. Charles Scribner's Sons. 360 pages. $3.00.

The author of *The Gospel in Art, The Use of Art in Religious Education,* and other works interpreting art in the Christian Church, has now given us a good book on the everyday life of Bible times.

Professor Bailey is reported to have made nineteen trips to Palestine as a part of his preparation for this publication. More than 100 photographic illustrations and maps are evidence of his keen observation.

Every church school worker would profit by a careful reading of this book. Though the author at times may give too much play to his imagination, in general he sticks to facts and is both accurate and interesting in his presentation. His frequent references to Bible passages as he unfolds his story invite one to keep the Bible at hand for constant reference and new insight.

What Jesus Said, by Omar J. Cole, Christian Board of Publication. 32 pages. 25 cents.

What It Means to Be a Christian, by Herbert L. Minard. Christian Board of Publication. 32 pages. 25 cents.

Each of these is a combination text and work book for pupils about twelve years of age, especially suitable for use in weekday and vacation church schools. The approach is interesting and vital. The points of emphasis are largely in the areas of habit and attitude rather than doctrine. Liberal and wise use is made of Bible passages which the pupil must look up and

study before proceeding to the next step.

Know Your Bible Series. Study 1, "How Your Bible Grew Up"; Study 2, "The Bible and the First World State"; Study 3, "Writing Scriptures under Dictators." By Roy L. Smith. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 64 pages each, 25 cents each.

The first of these is a Bible Introduction. Study 2 covers the time and work of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah. Study 3 includes Deuteronomy, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and Lamentations.

Each book is set up in question-and- answer form. The author, a prominent and clever religious journalist, asks the questions and reports the answers given him by a board of Biblical scholars. The result is an interesting and informative study that combines Biblical history and Biblical introduction very effectively. With some of the statements we can not fully agree, but in general the answers are enlightening and enriching.

Render unto Caesar, a Collection of Sermon Classics on All Phases of Religion in Wartime. Lewis Publishing Co. 223 pages.

Most of the chapters in this book were written in 1942 and 1943, several in 1917, and three each in 1776–77 and 1861–62. Dr. P. O. Bersell's *Presidential Message* from 1942 is fittingly included.

While some of the chapters are better than others, each has a place in the volume. The writers are by no means unanimous on all points, but a study of each contribution is helpful to the reader who desires to clarify his thinking about a Christian's participation in war.

More People Are Asking, by John P. Milton. Augustana Press. 154 pages. $1.25.

Here are gathered together about a hundred questions and answers under four headings: "The Christian and His Bible," "The Christian and His Church," "The Christian and Religious Practices," and "The Christian and His Amusements."

Many of the questions are of the kind that are of interest to Christians everywhere. A considerable number of passages from the Bible are included, which people have found difficult of interpretation and upon which they ask for light.

The answers are sound and clearly stated. More than that, they are nearly always put forward in a manner that is friendly, sympathetic, and persuasive.